Encyclopaedia Aristasiana

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Television in Aristasia Pura

The invention of television exists in The Motherland. The two primary nations for this invention are Quirinelle and Novaria. Novaria also has the great Polydromes in which one has a full-surround audio-tacto-visual experience, and the home version of this (known as the Home Kinnidrome) is becoming increasingly affordable. A basic system is available for under a thousand crowns at Khorinaya in Nevrayapurh.

But what are the programmes like? They are much more formal than Tellurian television programmes. There are breaks and intermissions in which music is played and country scenes or flowers are shown. Programmes are very formally announced by well-dressed announcers who use very fine and careful diction. Broadcasting does not take place twenty-four hours a day, but for set periods of time.

By Tellurian standards a lot of the programmes would seem to be aimed at a younger audience. This is because in Aristasia the qualities of innocence, trustfulness and absolute goodness are highly prized. Dark and sinister programmes would on the whole be considered reprehensible. Cartoons with bright, clean colours and a degree of sheer cuteness that many Tellurians would dislike are very prominent in both programming and the small amount of advertising.

Other programmes include those which are like family outings, taking the viewer to new places, often with commentaries that are both charming and highly fanciful. Literary allusions and a very "flowery" style of language are quite usual as well as very imaginative and sometimes surprisingly whimsical ideas — nonetheless all presented in a very formal tone. In Novaria the Polydrome and Home Kinnidrome are used very extensively to enhance such experiences.

There are comedy programmes, although the humour might be lost on many Tellurians. It avoids both vulgarity and unkindness and tends to turn on highly whimsical and fantastical ideas, clever plays on words and some downright silliness.

One of the most popular programmes is called "Lady Carleon Investigates" (at least this is how it has been translated into

Tellurian terms) and is about an aristocratic lady who investigates strange happenings. In Telluria this would probably be a murder-mystery series but in Aristasia murder is terribly rare and too shocking to be portrayed on television, and crime in general is rather unusual. Lady Carleon's mysteries usually involve ghosts and good or evil spirits, even faeries.

In Telluria such themes would be unsatisfying as spirits are regarded as unreal and (as someone once observed of Polish Countesses in fiction) "since they might do anything one really doesn't care what they do". In Aristasia attitudes are reversed. The "Polish Countess problem" would apply precisely to criminals, who are regarded as too aberrant and out-of-the-normal (enormate, athamë) to be of great interest, while the lore of the spirit world is relatively settled and understood and makes for good stories.

This leads us to the one exception to the ban on dark and sinister themes - ghost stories. There are some really very spooky (but never gory) ghost stories on Aristasian television (the Lady Carleon series, though, does not come into this category). They are shown late at night and with considerable warning as to their scariness.

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